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Select Committee on Intelligence  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

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75-3639

Donald P. Gregg  
Review Staff  
Central Intelligence Agency

December 10, 1975

Dear Mr. Gregg,

On page 4651 of the uncorrected version of Mr. George Carver's testimony before this Committee on December 3, 1975, he makes reference to an 11 October letter to the Department of Defense. Could you please furnish a copy of that letter for the Committee files?

On page 4652 of the same testimony, Mr. Carver mentions a memorandum he wrote on the 13 of October 1967 to Mr. Goulding of the Department of Defense. Could you likewise furnish that document for the Committee files?

On page 4673 of the same transcript, there is a reference to a briefing paper. Could you please furnish that paper for the Committee files?

Additionally, we would like to request any and all materials prepared by, or used by, Mr. Carver in his meetings with the Senior Advisory Group, and subsequently with the President, on March 25 and 26, 1968. Likewise we would like to request any and all memoranda of conversation drafted by Mr. Carver pursuant to his discussions on those two days.

Yours sincerely,  
*Vance Hyndman*  
P. Vance Hyndman  
for the Committee

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The following are corrections in the text of the 3 December 75 hearings before the House Select Committee on Intelligence.

Page 4651 - line 6 - On 13 October we took specific....

Page 4651 - line 14 - On 10 October they sent the draft....

Page 4652 - line 2 - On the 13th of October.... Refers to same letter as line 6 of Page 4651.

Page 4673 - line 17 - to hear the briefing I had given them.  
Oral briefing by Mr. Carver from notes - no written text used.



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13 October 1967

**MEMORANDUM FOR:** The Honorable Philip Goulding  
Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs

**SUBJECT :** Proposed MACV Press Briefing on Enemy Order  
of Battle

1. We have carefully reviewed the proposed MACV press briefing on enemy order of battle attached to Mr. Henkin's memo of 10 October 1967. We have serious substantive and procedural problems with the 10 October version of this proposed briefing and hence cannot support it or concur in its use.

2. With regard to the substantive issues, we offer the following comments:

a. We have no problems with the 119,000 figure used for the regular forces though we have not seen the evidence or methodology supporting the statement that "regular strength peaked at 127,500 in September 1966."

b. On administrative services, we believe the operative sentence should indicate that the US Government now estimates that there are at least 35,000 to 40,000 full-time personnel in this category. The draft briefing portrays the 35,000-40,000 figure as a minimum-maximum range. We regard it as a minimum threshold, believe the number of full-time personnel may well be higher, and are certain that additional large numbers of individuals perform administrative support tasks on a part-time but more than casual basis.

c. On the guerrillas, we cannot accept the statement that current guerrilla strength "is clearly down to between 70,000 and 90,000 with strong indications that the actual figure is

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closer to be lower than the higher limits of the estimate." The last clause of that sentence is particularly unacceptable. The understanding reached in Saigon during the recent CIA-DIA-INR-MACV order of battle discussions was that the guerrilla strength is now probably (not clearly) between 70,000 and 90,000.

d. We also cannot accept the way in which the rest of what used to be called "irregular" forces -- i.e., the self-defense, secret self-defense, assault youth and other casual elements -- are written off as "fifth columnists" and "fellow travellers." This mis-states the facts. Although we agree that the self-defense, secret self-defense and assault youth should not be included in the military order of battle per se, we feel that in the aggregate these elements contribute a great deal to overall VC capabilities. Furthermore, evidence continues to come in showing that the VC make considerable use of these "irregulars" and not infrequently assign them actual combat tasks. We believe that any briefing must be candid about these VC elements and should generally follow the narrative account of their strength and function agreed in Saigon -- the text of which is attached hereto.

e. On the political cadre, the number used (75,000-85,000) is that agreed upon in Saigon but the number was not developed in the manner outlined in your 10 October draft. This draft suggests that the new figure was developed by taking the old figure of 40,000 and adding political elements at hamlet level. This is simply not true. The 40,000 (actually 39,000) figure is an old GVN figure in circulation long before our current definitions of infrastructure were developed. It bears no historical or other relationship to the new figure.

3. Apart from these matters of substance there are elements of tone and procedure in your 10 October draft with which we have considerable difficulty.

a. It is true that our new order of battle figures derive from greatly improved, though still imperfect, intelligence and do not reflect any recent absolute increase in the size of

Communist forces. This fact and the thought that these figures will be subjected to continuous review and frequent changes should be the basic theme of any press briefing. The 10 October draft, however, overstates our present degree of confidence in the figures for the administrative services, guerrillas and political cadres. We are not this confident; in fact, we believe that new evidence will probably turn up and require us to modify these figures. If this occurs, the confident tone of any such press briefing will be recalled with considerable damage to our credibility.

b. The whole proposed treatment of the old irregular and new guerrilla figure will be torn apart by the Saigon press corps. It suggests that we have previously overestimated this category whereas exactly the reverse is true. As the press well knows, the old "irregular" figure of 100,000-120,000 was allegedly composed of one-third guerrillas and two-thirds self-defense/secret self-defense. Thus the press will believe, with justification, that our old "guerrilla" figure was on the order of 33,000-40,000. If we up the guerrilla estimate, as we should, to 70,000-90,000, this can hardly be called a downward adjustment.

c. Any attempt to ignore the other components that used to be carried in the "irregular" category or write them off as unimportant fifth columnists will be considered by the press (again with justification) as a clumsy piece of dissimulation.

d. On the political cadre, we would be much better advised not to lump our political cadre estimates with our military order of battle data nor to pretend that we now have a very firm handle on this component of the Communist organization. The 75,000-85,000 figure can be used, if necessary, but should be used as the number we get from applying our current definition of "infrastructure," with the added notation that this definition is in serious need of refinement and hence this number is perishable and not particularly meaningful. It should also be pointed out that we are now at work on

refining our definition of the various components of the Communist political organization and hope to be able to assign meaningful numbers to these components as soon as this exercise is completed. When we do, this 75,000-80,000 figure will disappear.

4. We believe that the net effect of any briefing based on the 10 October draft would be to present a series of alleged intelligence judgments that could not be substantiated at this time and would almost certainly compound our credibility problems if they were presented in this form. Whether or not any briefing is given and the precise language to be used are, of course, matters outside our purview and ones that will require consideration at highest levels. We strongly recommend, however, that the briefing outlined in your 10 October draft not be given.

George A. Carver, Jr.  
Special Assistant for Vietnamese Affairs

O/DCI/SAVA/GAC:lkp/33October1967

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